

# BOROUGH OF SOUTH MOLTON

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## Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1949

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F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.),

Medical Officer of Health.



*113, East Street,*

*South Molton,*

*June, 1950.*

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and  
Councillors of the Borough of South Molton.*

*Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,*

*I have the honour to present the Annual Report  
on the Health and Sanitary Administration of the  
Borough for the year 1949.*

*Your obedient Servant,*

*F. J. H. MARTIN,*

*M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon),*

*Medical Officer of Health.*



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# South Molton Borough.

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## LIST OF STAFF.

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The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of :—

### Part-time Officers :—

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon),  
Medical Officer of Health.

MRS. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

### Whole-time Officer :—

H. SETTLE, M.I.Mun.E., M.I.H.E., M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Sanitary Inspector.

## Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	5,910
Population	...	...	...	...	2,982
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	980
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£15,327
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	£60

## Vital Statistics.

		Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	...	22	22	44
Illegitimate	...	3	1	4
				<hr/> 48

Rate per 1,000 population - 16·0

		Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	...	1	0	1
Illegitimate	...	0	0	0
				<hr/> 1

Rate per 1,000 total Live and Still Births 20·4

		Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	... ..	19	26	45

Death rate per 1,000 population 15·0

## Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	0

Here is a Table that shows the comparative figures for South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The local Death Rate is shown corrected by the areal comparability factor.

Rate per 1,000 population.			Death Rate per 1,000	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton R.D.	16·0	·33	11·85	83·3	0
England and Wales	16·7	·39	11·7	32·0	3·0



### Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

				Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	1	3	4
Illegitimate	...	...	...	0	0	0
						<hr/> 4
Rate per 1,000 Live Births	-	-	-	83.3		<hr/>
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	...	0

### Causes of Death during the year 1949.

						Males	Females
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer of Breast	...	...	...	...	...	0	2
Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	...	3	3
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	5	9
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Congenital Malformation	...	...	...	...	...	0	3
Violent Cause	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
All other Causes	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
						<hr/> 19	<hr/> 26

## Cases of Infectious Diseases notified in 1949

AGE		MEASLES		WHOOPIING COUGH		SCARLET FEVER		PNEUMONIA	
Years		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-1	...	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
1-2	...	—	—	3	1	—	—	—	—
2-3	...	—	—	4	2	—	—	—	—
3-4	...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4-5	...	1	—	3	2	—	—	1	—
5-10	...	2	—	2	8	—	—	—	—
10-15	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-20	...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	-	4	1	13	14	—	—	1	—
		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

## Tuberculosis.

### New Cases notified during the year 1949.

Age.		PULMONARY.		NON-PULMONARY.	
		Males	Females	Males	Females
17	...	—	1	—	—
21	...	1	—	—	—
27	...	—	1	—	—
28	...	—	1	—	—
		—	—	—	—
TOTALS	-	1	3	—	—
		—	—	—	—



# General Provisions of Health Services in the Area.

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## HOSPITALS.

### 1. TUBERCULOSIS.

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds.

### 2. MATERNITY CARE.

The Devon County Council is continuing to act as they did in 1948, as Agents of the Regional Hospital Board, until the Board has completed its own plans for the treatment of Maternity cases.

The South Molton Cottage Hospital is functioning as usual, and is now under the North Devon Hospital Group, and deals with a certain number of Maternity cases.

There is also a Ward of 15 beds, with a fully-qualified staff, at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for cases of doubt or difficulty.

### 3. ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The Tiverton Isolation Hospital is closed and the cases are now sent to the Bideford Isolation Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. It is of recent construction and well-equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases. It comprises 34 beds (six of which are in observation cubicles) and four cots.

### 4. SMALL POX.

The Small Pox Hospital to which any cases of Small Pox will be sent is at Upton Pyne. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter, 67158, and this is the same number for the Ambulance.

### 5. GENERAL.

The South Molton Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough, serves the Area. There are 12 beds for Medical, Surgical and Maternity Cases.

The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple, also serves the Area and provides modern Medical and Surgical treatment.

In South Molton there are 29 beds available at Beech House for the Chronic Sick.

A Blood Bank has been established at North Devon Infirmary.

## 6. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

V.D. CLINIC.—This is held at the Annex of the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple.

### SESSIONS.

		<i>Females.</i>	<i>Males.</i>
Mondays	-	4.0 p.m.	5.15 p.m.
Thursdays	-	4.30 p.m.	5.45 p.m.

CHEST CLINIC held at North Devon Infirmary.

Tuesdays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	} Clinic and X-Ray Examinations.
Thursdays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	
Fridays	-	9.0 a.m. - 1.0 p.m. 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.	} A.P. refills.

## 7. PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOMES.

There is a District Nurse living and practising in the Borough, and there is also a private practising Midwife living in the Borough.

## 8. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and is in charge of Dr. Moore. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its Diagnostic and Consultative Services are available for all patients, and it undertakes the Analysis of Drinking Water and Milk.

This Service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the Medical Practitioners in your District.

## 9. IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

68 children received a course of primary injections and 147 children received a reinforcing injection.

## 10. VACCINATION.

13 children were vaccinated during the year.

## 11. AMBULANCE SERVICE.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (*i.e.* the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon County Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the Agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme, an Ambulance Station has been established at South Molton. The District served is South Molton and South Molton Rural District.

### **Water Supply.**

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor, and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,000,000 gallons. It is piped therefrom to the filter house at Westland Bridge and is passed through three "Candy" Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6 ins. diameter to the Service Reservoirs at North Road, South Molton, the Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons; the water is then distributed through the town mains of varying diameters. The water is analysed at regular intervals and the Analyst's Reports are still very satisfactory, the general description being that the water "is of a high degree of chemical and bacteriol purity." I find that the Filters and system generally are maintained in a highly efficient manner by the employee in charge. There is a Chlorination Plant at the Service Reservoirs which at the moment is not in use, having been dismantled in order to move same to a new position at the North Molton Candy Filter House. Filters are in good order.

Tenders have been received for laying new Water Mains in North Road, North Street, Georgenympton Road and Exeter Gate Estate and work on same is now awaiting Ministry approval of a Tender.

HOLYWELL RESERVOIR DAM.—A firm of Consulting Engineers have now prepared Plans, Specifications and Quantities for raising the Dam at Holywell Reservoir which when completed will impound a further two million gallons of water.

### **Sewage Disposal.**

The existing Sewage Disposal Works are still incapable of properly treating the sewage, and the provision of the new disposal works should be put in hand as quickly as possible as the conditions both at Mole Bridge and West End are extremely bad, and there does not appear to be any way of improving the present works unless at considerable cost. Any expense incurred in this way would be wasted as it could not form a part of the new Sewage Disposal Scheme. Plans, Specifications and Quantities are now almost ready for invitation of Tenders. Ministry approval to Tender has been received.



## Housing.

16 Cornish Unit Houses were erected and tenanted during the year.

11 Traditional Houses were erected and tenanted during the year.

3 Traditional Houses are in the course of erection and will be completed early in 1950.

4 Private Bungalows have been erected during the year.

1 Private House has been erected during the year.

3 Private Bungalows are in the course of erection and will be completed early in 1950.

70 Houses have been erected by the Borough since the end of the War, 16 Houses are in the course of erection and a further 12 Houses are being planned. This is a very fine record for a Town of the size of South Molton.

## Sanitation.

Number of Houses inspected	...	...	...	14
Number of Preliminary Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	14
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	...	Nil

The chief defects that have been dealt with are :—

Roofs repairs and made watertight.

Stoves and Cooking Apparatus renewed.

Lavatory Pans renewed.

Drain cleared.

General repairs to walls, ceilings and floors.

## Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Domestic refuse is collected regularly in the built-up area of the Borough and monthly collections are now made at outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the dump at Hache Road. A further piece of land has been fenced in and this will provide tipping space for about a further year. The dump is regularly treated for the destruction of Rodents.

## Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, and Orders.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken :—The Refuse Tip at Hache Road, the Sewage Outfall Tanks at Mole Bridge and West End Terrace are periodically treated by pre-baiting and then with poisoned baits and the results are satisfactory. A number of private houses and business premises have been visited on receipt of complaints, and disinfection has been carried out.

## Inspection of Meat and other Foods.

Meat supplies have been regularly inspected on arrival at the Pannier Market, and all unsound meat has been seized and destroyed or returned to Barnstaple, after consultation with the Authorities at Barnstaple. The method of transporting and general handling of the meat is, however, not at all satisfactory, and complaints are frequently made to the Authorities, but do not result in any improvement.

### Bakehouses.

Bakehouses are inspected periodically, and they are generally found to be in good order.

### Factories and Workshops.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and are found to be kept as required by the Factory Act. Some improvements have been carried out.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough :—

Number on Register	...	...	...	14
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	22
Notices Served	...	...	...	5

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the Borough :—

Number on Register	...	...	...	24
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	26
Notices served	...	...	...	4

Cases in which defects were found :—

Want of Cleanliness—Found	...	...	8
„ „ —Remedied	...	...	8
Insufficient Sanitary Conveniences—Found	...	...	1
„ „ —Remedied	...	...	1

### Foods Condemned as Unfit for Human Consumption.

Wet Fish	...	...	17 stone
Carcase Meat	...	...	3 cwt., 73 lbs.
Tinned Fish	...	...	11 Tins
Tinned Milk	...	...	48 Tins
Tinned Fruit	...	...	25 Tins
Tinned Vegetables	...	...	125 Tins
Tinned Soups	...	...	2 Tins
Cereals	...	...	25 Packets
Tinned Meat	...	...	29 Tins

## Ice Cream.

All the premises in which Ice Cream is made have been inspected regularly, and we are pleased to report that generally the conditions are satisfactory, and we find that retailers are very willing to accept our advice and to make such improvements in premises and methods of handling we may from time to time request. Sampling has been carried out by the County Council, but this duty has now been delegated to the local Authority.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk and Mr. Settle for their valuable help to me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.





